

- (3) to place the trivial name *thalia* Linnaeus, 1758 (as published in the binominal combination *Papilio thalia*) on the "Official List of Specific Trivial Names in Zoology";
- (4) to render an *Opinion* recording the decisions specified in (1) to (3) above.

"*Hemerobius*"  
Linnaeus, 1758, and  
"*Chrysopa*" Leach  
1815 (Class Insecta,  
Order Neuroptera):  
designation of type  
species of, under  
the plenary powers

34. THE COMMISSION had under consideration an application (file Z.N.(S.)42) submitted jointly by Mr. John Cowley (Bridgwater, Somerset, England), Dr. F. J. Killington (Parkstone, Dorset, England), Mr. D. E. Kimmins (British Museum (Natural History), London) and Miss C. E. Longfield (British Museum (Natural History), London), asking that the Commission should use their plenary powers to designate *Hemerobius humulinus* Linnaeus, 1758, to be the type species of the genus *Hemerobius* Linnaeus, 1758, and *Hemerobius perla* Linnaeus, 1758, to be the type species of the genus *Chrysopa* Leach, 1815 (Class Insecta, Order Neuroptera) (Cowley, Killington, Kimmins & Longfield, 1946, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 1: 188-191). The specialists by whom this application was submitted were members of the Sub-Committee on Neuropteroid Groups of the Committee on Generic Nomenclature of the Royal Entomological Society of London, and it was by the last-named body that the application had been laid before the Commission.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT (MR. FRANCIS HEMMING) said that in its present form the application now before the Commission had been submitted in June 1937. The same question had however been previously raised in 1927 by Dr. Roger C. Smith (Kansas State Agricultural College, Manhattan, Kansas, U.S.A.) and in 1931 by Dr. F. C. Hottes (Urbana, Ill., U.S.A.), but for reasons which it had been impossible to trace neither of those applications had been brought before the Commission for decision. The actual problem raised in this application was very simple: The species *Hemerobius humulinus* Linnaeus, 1758, was universally accepted as the type species of the genus *Hemerobius* Linnaeus, 1758, and had been so accepted ever since that name had been published, but under the *Règles* this species was in fact the type species of *Chrysopa* Leach, 1815, whereas the type species of *Hemerobius* Linnaeus was *Hemerobius perla* Linnaeus. The strict application of the *Règles* in this case would thus involve the exchange of type species of these two genera and would lead to the greatest confusion not only because of the importance of the genera themselves, but also because each of these genera was the type genus of a family in the

Order Neuroptera. This was therefore a case pre-eminently suitable for the use by the Commission of their plenary powers, for the Congress, when granting those powers in 1913, had expressly referred to the need for preventing by this means the confusion which would arise from the transfer of names from one taxonomic unit to another. The only comments which had been received in regard to this case were:—(1) from Commissioner Th. Mortensen (Denmark) and (2) from Dr. C. F. W. Muesebeck (United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.), both of whom supported the application. Dr. Muesebeck had written: "I think this is an excellent illustration of how the principle of establishing an official list may be used. Certainly it would avoid confusion in this case and action by the Commission in this respect would be highly desirable." He (the Acting President) fully shared Dr. Muesebeck's view and he accordingly strongly recommended that the application submitted should be approved.

IN THE FOLLOWING DISCUSSION the view was expressed that it would be a disaster if the Law of Priority were to be allowed to create the confusion which would be inevitable unless the Commission used their plenary powers in the manner proposed.

THE COMMISSION agreed:—

(1) to use their plenary powers:—

(a) to set aside all selections of the type species of the under-mentioned genera made prior to the present decision:—

(i) *Hemerobius* Linnaeus, 1758;

(ii) *Chrysopa* Leach, 1815;

(b) to designate *Hemerobius humulinus* Linnaeus, 1758, to be the type species of the genus *Hemerobius* Linnaeus, 1758;

(c) to designate *Hemerobius perla* Linnaeus, 1758, to be the type species of the genus *Chrysopa* Leach, 1815;

(2) to place the under-mentioned names on the "Official List of Generic Names in Zoology":—

(a) *Hemerobius* Linnaeus, 1758 (with the type species designated in (1)(b) above);

(b) *Chrysopa* Leach, 1815 (with the type species designated in (1)(c) above);

(3) to place the under-mentioned trivial names on the "Official List of Specific Trivial Names in Zoology":—

- (a) *humulinus* Linnaeus, 1758 (as published in the binominal combination *Hemerobius humulinus*);
- (b) *perla* Linnaeus, 1758 (as published in the binominal combination *Hemerobius perla*);
- (4) to render an *Opinion* recording the decisions specified in (1) to (3) above.

Articles 34 and 35 :  
position of a  
"nomen dubium"  
in relation to  
generic and specific  
homonymy defined.

**35. THE COMMISSION** had under consideration an application (file Z.N.(S).131) submitted by the late Dr. Arthur P. Jacot, asking for a ruling on the question whether it was necessary to treat the name *Acarus alatus* Hermann, 1804 (Class Arachnida, Order Acarina) as an invalid homonym of *Acarus alatus* Schrank, 1803, having regard to the fact that the latter name was a *nomen dubium*, the species so named by Schrank being unrecognisable (Jacot, 1946, *Bull. Zool. Nomencl.*, **1** : 191).

IN THE DISCUSSION which took place on this application it was observed that the point raised by Dr. Jacot was misconceived, for the *Règles* were concerned exclusively with objective nomenclatorial facts, not with taxonomic conceptions regarding the units to which names were given. The gravest confusion would immediately arise if the *Règles* were to provide that homonyms could be ignored when the older of any pair of homonyms was the name of a species which was unrecognisable. For such a provision would introduce a very dangerous subjective element into the problem of specific homonymy and inevitably lead to different names being used for the same species by different workers, in view of the fact that—as was well known to all systematists—a species that was unrecognisable to one worker was often recognised by another. The answer to the question raised by the late Dr. Jacot must therefore be that a specific name cannot be ignored for the purposes of Article 35 on the ground that it is a *nomen dubium*. In view of the fact that this question had been specifically raised, it would be useful if words were inserted in Article 35 to make the position clear. A corresponding provision should be inserted in Article 34, for a similar problem would arise when a generic name was indeterminate through its type species being unrecognisable.

#### THE COMMISSION :—

- (1) agreed that a very dangerous subjective element would be introduced into the problem of specific homonymy if it were permissible to ignore for the purposes of Article 35 a specific name or a specific trivial name on the ground that that name was a